

# FACULTY CIRCUIT

May 2003

Alberta Colleges & Institutes  
Faculties Association

acifa

Serving college and technical institute faculty

## FAIRVIEW COLLEGE & NAIT ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP

On April 14, 2003, Fairview College and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology entered into a partnership agreement, under which NAIT will assume responsibility for the administration of Fairview College as of July 1, 2004.

The partnership, which has the enthusiastic support of the Minister of Learning, was welcomed by the Fairview Board of Governors as an innovative, proactive solution to the “major challenge in expanding access to programs given the fiscal reality that would limit access” for students in northwest Alberta.

Fairview College President Daniel Dunwoody noted that rising operating costs, with no offsetting increase in government funding, made finding additional resources “essential to continued success” for his institution. The key to what the parties are calling a “synergistic” agreement is the redeployment of net cost savings accruing from administrative efficiencies “to expand the number and diversity of programs” offered in the six communities now served by Fairview College.

Both President Dunwoody and NAIT President Sam Shaw stressed that the partnership of their institutions was based on this commitment to maintain and expand program opportunities at each of Fairview College’s six campuses. According to the Partnership Principles agreed by the parties, NAIT will adhere to “sustainable” minimum enrolment levels and retain the community advisory committees in the communities served.

The Learning Minister was quick to praise this agreement as a demonstration of the Campus Alberta concept in action. Where this leaves Grande Prairie Regional College and Northern Lakes College, Fairview’s erstwhile partners in the Tri-College initiative

remains unclear.

The agreement between Fairview College and NAIT calls for “a smooth, fair and effective transition for students and staff at both institutions.” According to President Dunwoody, the impact on Fairview faculty as the partnership moves to “full implementation and integration” is expected to be “minimal.” In fact, Dunwoody suggests, “we anticipate more instructors being required in our campus communities,” as resources are redirected from administration to instruction and instructional support.

There are no guarantees, but the Fairview President insists that “the manner in which we deal with the impact on faculty and staff is critical to the success of the partnership.” Over the course of the transition year, the College will undertake “regular communications” with the faculty, staff, students and communities.

Details of NAIT’s plans for “new and expanded program opportunities” at the six Fairview campuses have yet to be announced, but the merger provides for a significant expansion in the scope of its activities in the northern part of the province. One key provision of the partnership agreement commits NAIT and Fairview College to take the lead in a major expansion of the delivery of trades and apprenticeship training in the City of Grande Prairie.

In line with Campus Alberta principles, Fairview College also agrees, under the terms of the merger, to support the efforts of NAIT to offer degrees and degree completion.

Further information on the NAIT-Fairview partnership is available at [www.fairviewc.ab.ca](http://www.fairviewc.ab.ca) and [www.nait.ab.ca](http://www.nait.ab.ca).

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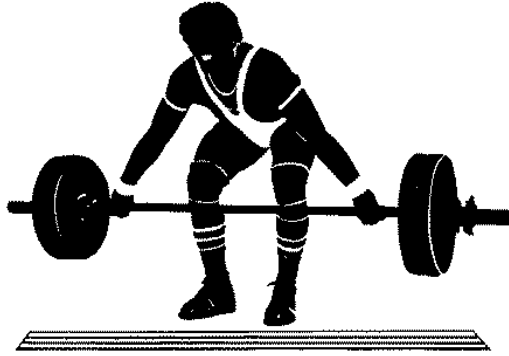
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## The Labour Scene

As seen by Terry Sway,  
Labour Relations Officer  
ACIFA



The following is a glance at the labour scene for the ACIFA member faculty associations.

### Collective Bargaining:

Patience is a virtue and at times it doesn't hurt to be virtuous when it comes to labour negotiations. Long bargaining sessions have finally ended for faculty at Grant MacEwan and Mount Royal. The main features of the settlements are as follows. At Grant MacEwan, retroactive to July 1, 2002, the ratified memorandum of agreement gives a 5.0 per cent increase in the first year and an additional 4.5 % effective July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004. Also, effective July 1, 2003, the existing salary grid is expanded by one additional incremental step.

At Mount Royal, faculty will receive, retroactive to July 1, 2002, an increase of 4.5%. The second year is a little more complex. Effective July 1, 2003, the salary grid is increased by 3.5 % and an additional 0.85% on January 1, 2004 to June 30, 2004. Along with the grid increases, a fund equivalent to 1% has been established to allow faculty workload reduction. The replacement instructor will be paid from the fund while the instructor maintains regular salary and then has available time to work on the "special project." A pilot project for lab instructors has been agreed to with monies equivalent to 0.5% to fund the project.

Keyano College completed the second year of a two year agreement by bargaining what was essentially a salary only re-opener. In combination of a grid re-structure (1.8%) and a (2.7%) increase to the new grid, faculty will receive effective July 1, 2003, an increase of 4.5% to June 30, 2004.

The Interest arbitration for Portage College was held on January 22, 2003. Arbitrator David Elliott awarded an increase of 4.5% retroactive to July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003. The one term was the last year of a three year agreement with the final year limited to salary only. The faculty association and the Board of Governors resumed bargaining almost immediately following the hearing. Other associations currently in collective bargaining include Medicine Hat, Bow Valley, Northern Lakes, Olds and Fairview. At Grande Prairie, the parties were unable to reach a memorandum of agreement. After an unsuccessful attempt to mediate the issues in dispute, the parties will be going to interest arbitration. At Fairview, the scope of bargaining has changed significantly since the announcement of the "partnership" between Fairview College and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. An interim agreement will be negotiated for the existing faculty at Fairview for a one year term, July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004.

Red Deer are still waiting for the arbitration award from their Interest arbitration. The hearing was held on November 18, 2002.

For more details or concerns about other labour issues, please call or e-mail me at the ACIFA office:  
(780) 423-4440 [swayt@acifa.gmcc.ab.ca](mailto:swayt@acifa.gmcc.ab.ca)

## Book Review

***Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition,  
by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, Princeton University Press, 1986.**

**Reviewed by Lawton Shaw, Ph.D., Chemistry Instructor at Mount Royal College**

*Laboratory Life* is a classic in science studies by French philosopher Bruno Latour and British sociologist Steve Woolgar. The book was born out of field work by Latour, who was invited to join a prestigious laboratory at the Salk Institute to observe the workings of the laboratory, and spent almost two years in the Institute observing the activities, conducting interviews of the scientists, and working as a lab assistant.

*Laboratory Life* stands out intellectually. It is not possible to pigeon-hole *Laboratory Life* as an historical or even sociological study. It attempts to give an answer to the question of how scientific facts and ‘order’ arise from scientific activity. Its four middle chapters approach the basic question in different, thought provoking ways.

Chapter 2, “An Anthropologist Visits the Laboratory,” is great reading. Using Latour’s field notes, the chapter is written in the spirit of an anthropologist trying to observe the culture and behaviour of a jungle tribe – except that this tribe is made up of scientists in a lab. The anthropologist observes that the tribe is primarily concerned with ‘inscriptions’: the recording of raw data, the processing of the data into other inscriptions such as graphs and figures, and finally processing these inscriptions into arguments that are presented in finished ‘papers’ to be sent off for publication in a scientific journal. Delightfully, the book includes a set of 14 photographic plates of various stages of the process.

In Chapter 3, the authors examine a specific example of the construction of a scientific fact – the ‘discovery’ of the molecular structure of a hormone releasing factor. They examine the process of how a particular idea, or statement, goes from uncertain terms to one that is accepted as factual. Chapter 4, “The Microprocessing of Facts,” is partly about how scientists build-up and dismantle the validity of these facts in day to day conversations. Perhaps most unnerving to scientist-readers and readers of science is the section that points out that what scientists will tout as a ‘discovery’, a brilliant leap of intellect, can often be explained by social factors – conversations with colleagues and local circumstances. These factors, like the processes of inscription, are always hidden from view in scientific literature.

Chapter 5, “Cycles of Credit,” introduces the idea that all scientific activity is driven by an economy of credibility. This is explored by looking at the career paths of individuals, the motivations of scientists, and the demand by society for reliable information. Scientists are motivated to improve their professional credibility which they cash in to receive research grants, titles, and other rewards.

*Laboratory Life* should be on the reading list of anyone who teaches science, especially at the college level. Most science instructors believe that scientific knowledge comes only from reason and the “scientific process”. There is more to it. This book will, at the very least, provoke some thought about how scientific facts come to be.

### **Ken Does it Again! AutoCad 2002 Assignments Out Now**

The prolific Ken McKee, an instructor at NAIT, has published another book! His latest, entitled *AutoCAD 2002 Assignments*, available this month, is described by the author as “an introductory text meant to build student confidence and ensure success.” For more information, please contact

Ken at 780-471-7752 or e-mail [kMcKee@nait.ab.ca](mailto:kMcKee@nait.ab.ca).

## **Provincial Budget 2003 PSE Gets Small Increase; Access the Goal**

In the April Provincial Budget, post-secondary education received a modest increase in funding. The Treasurer's announcement, in the Budget Speech, of a 4.1% increase in spending on PSE needs to be treated with caution, however.

Post-secondary institutions will receive an increase to base operating grants of only 2% (well below the current rate of inflation), or an additional \$22 million. There will be a further \$12 million to maintain 5,000 spaces created for apprentices, as well as \$10 million in new access funding "to enhance accessibility in high priority areas," for a total of \$44 million, (or about 4.1%).

Beyond that, there will be \$10 million in one-time performance funding, "to be awarded to institutions meeting key performance indicators including accessibility, quality, learner outcomes, and research."

Rather than raise base grants to institutions, the government, as in previous years, has opted to put the emphasis on conditional funding of this kind, to encourage conformity with its policy goals. Guidelines for access and performance funding in this Budget have not yet been announced. The Minister of Learning stated in the debate on the Learning Estimates that the key performance indicators (KPIs) are currently under review, "to ensure that they are fully responsive to what is needed within Alberta's post-secondary institutions."

In her speech, the Treasurer identified the government's priority for PSE as "making sure students have access to university, college and technical institute programs." As Dr. Oberg made clear in the House, it is his department's goal "to increase the number of students in our post-secondary system." He identified the access fund as "one of the best ways we have" to increase the size and enrolment of post-secondary institutions, and pointed to the total of 11,000 new post-secondary spaces which

will be created through the access fund in 2003/04.

The Minister noted that access funding allows the government to determine what post-secondary places are required "because of trends that are occurring in business...in the availability of jobs...in our society."

Meanwhile, the failure of base operations grants to keep pace with the growing demands on the system has post-secondary institutions in the province scrambling to find savings in their own budgets this year. Cuts to programs, services and staff have already been announced in our sector.

In summary: as expected, healthcare dominates the spending plans of the Alberta government for this budget year, with basic education and infrastructure also high on the agenda. While there is some new money in the Learning Budget, including stepped up investment in student loans and scholarships, post-secondary education funding remains tightly constrained and focused on increasing access. Base funding seems to have hit a wall.

### **Editorial Content**

The views in the Faculty Circuit are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect ACIFA's policies and positions. Please address all inquiries and submissions to:

John Nicholls, Research and Liaison Officer,  
Alberta Colleges & Institutes Faculties Association,  
#412 10357 – 109<sup>th</sup> Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 1N3  
voice: (780) 423-4440 fax: (780) 423-4515  
e-mail [nicholls@acifa.gmcc.ab.ca](mailto:nicholls@acifa.gmcc.ab.ca)  
web: <http://www.gmcc.ab.ca/acifa>

### **Member Associations**

Alberta College of Art and Design Faculty Association  
Bow Valley College Faculty Association  
Faculty Association of Medicine Hat College  
Faculty Association of Red Deer College  
Fairview College Academic Staff Association  
Grande Prairie Regional College Academic Staff Association  
Grant MacEwan College Faculty Association  
Keyano College Faculty Association  
Lakeland College Faculty Association  
Lethbridge Community College Faculty Association  
Mount Royal Faculty Association  
NAIT Academic Staff Association  
NorQuest College Faculty Association  
Northern Lakes College Faculty Association  
Olds College Faculty Association  
Portage College Faculty Association  
SAIT Academic Faculty Association